

# **Commission to Examine Racial Inequity in the Law**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, November 7, 2019

1pm – 3pm

Location: Patrick Henry Building (East Reading Room)

1. Call to Order by the Chair
    - i. Commissioners Present:
      1. Hon. Jerrauld Jones
      2. Hon. Birdie Jamison
      3. Carla Jackson
      4. Leslie Chamber Mehta
      5. Cynthia Hudson
      6. Andy Block
      7. Hank Chambers
      8. Jill Hanken
    - ii. Commissioners Not Present:
      1. Hon. Mike Herring
  2. Public Comment: No public comment was received.
  3. Administrative Items
    - a. Adoption of the October 23, 2019 Meeting Minutes – duly adopted
    - b. FOIA – Commission Counsel advised that when more than two Commissioners respond to email that grouping of individuals may constitute a public meeting.
    - c. Adoption of the agenda: The agenda was duly adopted.
  4. Discussion and report review
    - i. Criminal: Jamison & Herring
    - ii. Education: Block & Hudson
    - iii. Confederate Pensions Memorials: Jones & Mehta
    - iv. Health: Hanken & Chambers
    - v. Finance: Jackson & Chambers
    - vi. Housing: Block, Jamison & Jones
    - vii. Miscellaneous: Jackson & Mehta
    - viii. Transportation: Hudson & Herring
    - ix. Voting: Hanken & Herring
- General Review of Acts identified for further action

- Commissioners reviewed Acts that been identified at previous meetings for further action and made final determinations regarding which Acts should be recommended for repeal in the Interim Report.
- Action on Confederate Monuments: The Commissioners acknowledged that while the Confederate Monuments have figured prominently in perpetuating racial differences, the issue of their status and future is historically complex and presently the subject of pending litigation involving the Commonwealth and local governments. Additionally, the Commission is aware that several legislators have indicated that they will introduce legislation related to these issues in the coming General Assembly session. Therefore, the Commission has decided to withhold action at this time on laws related to Confederate Monuments.
- Finance and Budget-related material: The Commission recognizes that the Commonwealth historically funded programs and institutions designed continue the racist legacy of the Confederacy. However, appropriated funds are different than legislation as the state Appropriation Act, unlike legislation, has a two year life-span. Therefore, the Commission deemed its time more valuably spent reviewing laws that remain on the books today.
- The Commission decided to retitle “Miscellaneous” to “Matters of General Application” to reflect its multi-faceted dimensions.

## 5. Next Steps

- a. Next meeting
  - i. Mid-December 2019

December meeting was set for December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10am-12pm in the Patrick Henry Building. At that meeting, the Commission will reconvene to discuss next steps following the submission of the Interim Report to the Governor, as well as to discuss future direction of the Commission’s work in 2020.

***[Since the meeting of the Commission, the Chair has called for the Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to be postponed to later in the month. The date and time of that meeting will be updated on the Commonwealth Calendar.]***

The Vice Chair asked the Commissioners to consider whether to focus some of the Commission’s work in the future on the history of racial inequity that has affected Virginia’s Native American community.

- b. Further business

Commissioners were asked to submit all edits by November 12, 2019, so that they could be incorporated into a final draft to be completed by November 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Chair thanked the Vice Chair for his drafting work and oversight on the report preparation. The Chair also thanked staff for their support in this area.

6. Adjournment – The Commission stood adjourned until December 2, 2019.